(b) if so, what is the Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to identify persons responsible for the loss and to specify penal measures to be adopted against them; and

(d) in what manner Government propose to prevent the recurrence of such lapses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The loss in the Production of Passport was higher due to use of manual system of passport manufacturing. In order to enhance production and bring down the wastage, Government of India has procured the Automatic Passport Manufacturing System (APMS) and the wastage has been substantially reduced.

Revenue shortfall

2428. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item entitled "CAG raps Centre for revenue shortfall" appearing in the Business Standard dated 16th March, 2002;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to address the problems highlighted in the CAG's report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The thrust of the article is on the Customs revenue shortfall from the

Budget Estimate during 2000-2001. The shortfall in customs revenue during the year 2000-2001 is mainly attributed to negative growth in non-POL imports in dollar terms, change in the composition of imports, reduction in the import duty rate during the year on petroleum crude and on petroleum products; and growth in exports leading to increased drawback disbursement affecting the overall revenue.

(c) The Government have taken a number of measures from time to time to improve tax realizations. These include rationalization of tariff structure, review and withdrawal of tax exemptions wherever necessary, plugging leakage of revenue through anti-smuggling and anti-evasion measures, setting up of Directorate of Valuation to monitor and disseminate international prices of imported commodities, simplification of tax collection procedures to improve tax compliance, etc.

Sick industries registered with BIFR

2429. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in the incidence of industrial sickness since 1998;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of sick industrial companies registered with BIFR during the year, 1997; and

(d) the number of sick industrial companies registered with BIFR during the years 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) As per the information